

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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TAGS: PINT, SOCI, CI

SUBJ: CONTINUING DISSENSION WITHIN LUTHERAN CHURCH RESURFACES

REF: SANTIAGO A-16

1. SUMMARY: CONTINUING DISSENSION WITHIN LUTHERAN CHURCH OF CHILE HAS SURFACED DURING PAST WEEK AS OPPONENTS OF CHURCH LEADER, BISHOP HELMUTH FRENZ, AGAIN CALL PUBLICLY FOR HIS RESIGNATION, AND SOLICIT GOC ASSISTANCE IN OUSTING HIM. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING JUNE 1 MEETING, THE CHURCH'S COORDINATING COUNCIL REPORTEDLY VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO SOLICIT THE GOC'S ASSISTANCE IN DISSOLVING THE PRESENT CHURCH STRUCTURE AND EXPELLING FRENZ AND FOUR OTHER PASTORS FROM CHILE (FRENZ IS GERMAN CITIZEN AS PRESUMABLY ARE OTHERS). DECISION APPARENTLY WAS BASED ON BELIEF THAT FRENZ AND OTHER PASTORS ARE INVOLVING CHURCH IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES. SOME ACCUSATIONS REFER TO PASTOR'S "LEFTIST" ACTIVITIES AGAINST CHILE. ARTICLES IN PRESS REFER SPECIFICALLY TO MEMBERSHIP ON LOCAL CHURCH-SPONSORED COMMITTEE FOR PEACE.

3. ONLY REPORTED PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR FRENZ CAME FROM PHILLIP POTTER, SECYGEN OF WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES, GENEVA, WHO

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ACCORDING TO PRESS STATED THAT ELECTED LEADERSHIP CONTINUES TO

LEGITIMATELY REPRESENT LUTHERAN CHURCH IN INTERNATIONAL CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS. POTTER WAS IMMEDIATELY DENOUNCED PUBLICLY BY CHURCH COORDINATING COUNCIL AS SECYGEN OF ORGANIZATION WHICH, THROUGH ITS SUPPORT OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL TERRORISM IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WORLD, HAS OUTLAWED ITSELF PURSUANT TO THE SPIRIT OF THE DECISIONS OF THE NUREMBERG WAR CRIME TRIBUNAL.

4. COMMENT: THE LUTHERAN CHURCH REMAINS BITTERLY SPLIT OVER BISHOP FRENZ. HIS OPPONENTS, APPARENTLY THE MAJORITY OF INFLUENTIAL LAYMEN, DESPERATELY WANT HIM OUT AND APPEAR WILLING TO TAKE DRASTIC STEPS TO OBTAIN THEIR OBJECTIVE. THEIR FORMAL REQUEST TO THE GOC FOR ASSISTANCE IS UNPRECEDENTED HERE. GOVERNMENT DOES NOT LIKE FRENZ BUT HAS NOT YET REACTED TO HIS OPPONENTS' REQUEST.

5. CHURCH LEADERS ARE SCHEDULED TO MEET JUNE 21. MEETING MAY LEAVE FRENZ WITH THE POORER PARISHES, SUPPORTED PRIMARILY BY THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA, AS THE WEALTHIER PARISHES, DOMINATED BY CHILEANS OF GERMAN DESCENT, BREAK AWAY.

6. ANTI-FRENZ LUTHERANS TEND TO BE CONSERVATIVE AND OF GERMAN ORIGIN. THEY STRONGLY SUPPORT GOC AND ARE SUSPICIOUS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS, BEGINNING WITH FRENZ, WHOM THEY IDENTIFY WITH EXTREME OPPONENTS OF JUNTA.
POPPER

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